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Lower Prairie Creek Project

Susie Van Kirk

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Lower Prairie Creek Project Prairie Creek Fish Hatchery

Deeds 228:65 (29 July 1936) Hammond and Little River Redwood Co., Ltd. and Hill-Davis Co., Ltd. to State of California, Dept. of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Game, beginning at qt sec cor between sec 14 and 23, 11N1E, as established by survey No. 365, Surveys 10:66 (26 July 1935); the Wly along S line sec 14 608 ft to Ely line of State highway right of way; th Nwly along Ely line 305.5 ft to a point which is distant 270 ft from said sec line, measured at a right angle to same; th Ely parallel with sec line 947.6 ft to a point which is distant 200 ft Ely and 270 ft Nly from qt sec cor, measured Ely along said sec line and Nly at right angles from same; th Sly at right angle to said sec line 420 ft; th Wly parallel with said sec line 200 ft to intersection with the qt sec line at W boundary of NE qt said sec 23; th Nly along qt sec line 150 ft to point of beginning, 5.8 acres.

With right of way for and maintenance of a pipe line, flume or other conductor of water from Lost Man Creek to the parcel....

Excepting and reserving to grantor...The right to muddy, roil or otherwise obstruct, pollute or disturb the waters of Prairie Creek or any tributary thereof that may be necessary or caused by any of the operations of grantor, their successors or assigns in logging the real properties of said grantors their successor or assigns.... releases grantor, etc. and/or officers, employees or agents thereof, from any and all damages and/or injury to grantee....and reserving to grantor the right to use all water in Prairie Creek and its tributaries which may be necessary or proper in any of the logging operations of grantor, except three second feet from Lost Man Creek, as covered by provision (1) of permit No. 461

BLA (8 Oct. 1927) Fish Hatchery Near Orick To Be Built

AU (13 Oct. 1927) Hatchery at Prairie Creek; State Fish and Game Commission Takes Steps to Establish Hatchery for Propagation of Trout and Salmon on Prairie Creek North of Orick; Location is Ideal; Robert McIntosh Cooperates with Commission—It seems to be a settled fact that a new fish hatchery will be established on the Robert McIntosh place on Prairie Creek, about three miles above Orick.

The first step, the finding of a site, has been accomplished with the announcement that Robert McIntosh, owner of the land, has leased to the State an acre of land at the junction of Prairie Creek and Lost Man Creek. McIntosh leased the land for a 24-year period at the low price of a dollar a year, showing a fine public spirit and cooperation with the fish and game commission in the establishing of the hatchery.

At the hatchery, which will be the most northern one in the state, it is planned that cut-throat trout, Chinook salmon, and possibly steelhead and silverside, will be hatched.

If the egg supply will permit, the hatchery at Prairie Creek will be as large as any in the state and it has been established that 85,000,000 salmon eggs will be available there. At the present time, the collection of cut-throat trout eggs is hardly more than an experiment. This year, 166,000 cut-throat have been planted from the hatchery near Fort Seward on Eel River, 100,000 in Prairie Creek and 66,000 in Maple Creek, a tributary to Big Lagoon. If enough eggs can be obtained at the new hatchery, the streams of northern California will be kept well stocked. This

would aid greatly in attracting tourists as the streams in this part of the state do not go dry in the summer time.

The construction of the new hatchery is in line with the idea that it is more economical to have the hatchery near the streams where the fish are to be planted and that the hatchery at Fort Seward is not large enough to supply all of the streams in this section of the state.

J.C. Lewis from the Steelhead hatchery, about eight miles from Fort Seward, has charge of the northern district.

It is expected that a hatchery will be established in Del Norte county in the near future, but a location has not yet been determined. The Del Norte chamber of commerce has been working on the project.

AU (10 May 1928) Prairie Creek Fish Hatchery—The *Union* man recently had the pleasure of visiting the fish hatchery at Prairie Creek, conducted under the auspices of the California Fish Commission and was shown through the plant by the accommodating foreman, George Null.

At the present time, the hatchery contains some 215,000 steelhead fry and 65,000 silver salmon, the fry being several weeks old, some eggs still being in the process of hatching at the time of the visit. The hatchery, which is a branch of the hatchery at Steelhead on Eel River, is under direct management of Superintendent J.C. Lewis and was ready for business in September of last year. The traps were built on Prairie Creek for the principal purpose of securing trout eggs for stocking the various streams of the county, but before the trout run commenced the high water of November cut around the traps making it necessary to rebuild them. Only a very small quantity of trout eggs were taken but the catch of steelhead and silverside salmon was quite satisfactory.

The baby fish are all doing well and with a loss of less than three percent of the hatch, which is considered good, and the commission will have a fine lot of fry ready for distribution in the fall. The fish are fed three times daily on a diet of fresh whole milk and raw beef liver, the liver being ground up fine in a meat grinder. The milk is supplied from the Arthur Davison dairy ranch nearby, the fish traps being located on the Davison property.

The hatchery troughs are housed in a temporary building, 24 by 80 feet, with a tent roof, and the water is carried down Prairie Creek for 1800 feet from a dam in wooden troughs, 12 inches square. The water is returned to Prairie Creek through a central trough and deposited in a deep hole. The trout population of the creek was not long in learning where to look for free lunch as a portion of the food introduced into the troughs for the fry is not consumed and is cleaned up in short order by the trout in the hole near the building. Several hundred trout are congregated here, some fine big speckled fellows being among the number and when food is thrown into the hole, the surface of the water fairly boils with the gamey fellows. This would be a favorite fishing pool for anglers but the fish are protected, the entire stream being set aside for the capture of eggs for propagation. Several eager anglers visited the stream on opening day and later and had to be informed of the new rule, much to their regret.

Mr. Null is assisted in caring for the fish by his son, Virgil Null, who lives at the hatchery with his family. Two other employees are assisting at present but will return to Steelhead shortly.

All the eggs that could be accommodated in the temporary hatchery were hatched this season and, in addition, 752,000 steelhead eggs were sent to the present hatchery at Steelhead together with a few silverside salmon eggs. It is hoped that this fall at least a million and a half eggs will be secured for hatching, as the traps have been put in good condition for a big run. The hatchery at present is more or less of a temporary proposition, but if the catch this fall is large, it

is more than likely that permanent buildings will be erected and hatching conducted on a considerable scale. The streams and lagoons on the northern portion of Redwood Hatchery need restocking badly and people in this end of the county hope that Prairie Creek will prove to be an important stream for egg collecting and hatching and that the commission will see fit to establish a permanent hatchery.

John Davison, one of the new “dollar a year deputies” takes a live interest in protecting the fish life of that section and deserves the thanks of the writer for courtesies extended while in the vicinity.

BLA (15 July 1933) Prairie Creek Hatchery Makes Large Plantings--.....Young rainbow trout in Little River last week; among other waters, fish will be placed in the Long Prairie pond of the California Barrel Co. at their camp on North Fork Mad River, where 25,000 rainbow fry will be placed. In all 200,000 or more rainbows will be planted and the entire lot of fish now being carried to the Prairie Creek hatchery must be in streams by August to make room for the fall hatching of cutthroat trout.

A total of two million salmon fry will also be liberated in Redwood Creek which were propagated at the Prairie Creek hatchery and sportsmen are to be congratulated at the planting the state is doing in this end of the county, which should insure good sport for the future.

BLA (15 Sept. 1934) Orick, Sept. 13—Mr. Evans and assistant V. Null of the Prairie Creek hatchery planted 5,000 salmon trout in Freshwater Lagoon.

BLA (30 Nov. 1935) Construction of a new state fish hatchery at Orick and a renewal of activity in building a wing dam at the mouth of the Klamath river are to be undertaken at once, under a new program worked out, the Requa camp for homeless single men, which this week is being transferred from the State Relief Administration to the Works Progress Administration.

The hatchery will be a \$15,000 job, and the wing dam project will cost about \$60,000, according to Charles P. Smith, WPA administrator of Eureka....part of the hatchery site has been cleared by the 100 men residing at the Requa camp....The new hatchery will have about three times the capacity of the old one it replaces.

BLA (21 Dec. 1935) Work is expected to get underway soon on the big fish hatchery site at Orick, according to Charles Smith of the Eureka WPA office.

The hatchery, which will be located at the mouth of Lost Man creek, will be able to handle a capacity of 5,000,000 fry. The project is being sponsored by the state department of natural resources and will cost \$67,000.

An 80-trough hatchery, three cottages for attendants, a four-car garage with lighting system will be built and will cost \$50,914. Clearing of the property will cost \$17,000. According to present plans, 200 men will be employed for a period of ten months.

BLA (7 March 1936) Work on the Prairie Creek fish hatchery has been started, Capt. J.D. Dondero, chief of the Humboldt district fish and game patrol, reported.

The hatchery is to be a modern and attractive group of buildings located just north of Orick on the Redwood highway. It will cost about \$50,000. Construction is under the supervision of Capt. Dondero and the labor is being provided by the WPA....

References

Mountain Anthropological Research. Chico, May 1997. "Final Historic Resources Study Report for Prairie Creek Fish Hatchery." Redwood National and State Parks, Humboldt County, California. Michael Corbett and Denise Bradley.